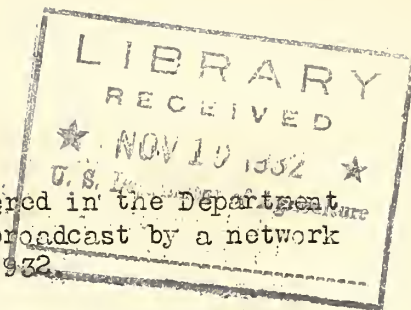


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SEPTEMBER WEATHER

A radio talk by J. B. Kincer, Weather Bureau, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 47 associate NBC radio stations, Wednesday, October 5, 1932.



How do you do, folks?

As affecting agricultural interests, the month of September was not unusual, or of material significance so far as temperatures were concerned, but there were some important and far-reaching aspects with regard to the moisture situation. The first part of the month was abnormally warm in the Eastern States, and the week ending September 20 had considerably above average temperature for the season in all Central States from the Mississippi River westward to the Pacific Ocean. Otherwise, temperatures, as a rule, were near normal in practically all sections of the country. Local areas in the upper Mississippi and the Rio Grande Valleys had a comparatively cool September, with the average monthly temperature from 2° to 4° subnormal, but in nearly all other sections the averages ran from about 1° below normal to 1° above.

The last half of September usually brings frost to the Northern States. By the first of October, in an average year, killing frost may be expected in the Appalachian Mountain sections as far south as Maryland, and farther west to south-central Michigan, the southern parts of Wisconsin and Minnesota, southeastern South Dakota, and central Nebraska. During the month of October, the frost line usually extends southward to southern North Carolina, the northern portions of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, central Arkansas, and southern Oklahoma. It does not usually occur in the extreme South until around the first of December. Thus, frost may be expected in the more northern sections of the United States some two months or more before it usually occurs in the extreme South. So far this year the frosts that have occurred in the North came at about the usual date, mostly a little later than the average. However, freezing weather is reported this morning as far South as southern Kansas. An unusually small amount of harm has been done, because crops matured rapidly this year, and were practically all safe when the frost came. The only harm has been to tender vegetation, such as late gardens and the like.

With regard to rainfall, recent conditions have been decidedly irregular. In the Atlantic area, especially in the States from North Carolina to New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the last four months have been very dry, resulting in one of the worst droughts of record in many places. For example, the rainfall at Harrisburg, Pa., for the four months from June to September, was only 56 per cent of normal; at Richmond, Va., 44 per cent, and Lynchburg, 48. In this middle Atlantic area, late crops were badly damaged, gardens failed, pastures dried up, and streams and wells have become very low, with a water shortage for stock and domestic purposes in some places.

When we cross the Appalachian Mountains and enter the Great Central Valleys, a very different picture comes to view, with a much more favorable outlook. There has been sufficient moisture to maintain the soil in satisfactory shape over a
(over)

large area in the central portion of the country, including the Ohio, middle Mississippi, and lower Missouri Valleys, and extending westward to about the central portions of Kansas and Nebraska. There are local exceptions principally in the eastern Ohio Valley. In this large and important agricultural area, summer and fall crops developed well, the soil has continued in mostly favorable condition for plowing and the preparation of seed beds; and the seeding of winter wheat is now progressing satisfactorily. The corn crop has matured practically everywhere, with much already cut in the Ohio Valley, and husking in Iowa. There is some complaint of dampness causing corn to mold in parts of the Ohio Valley, and grain is largely too moist to crib in upper Mississippi Valley districts.

Passing farther west, we find another dry area, which covers nearly all sections from the Pacific coast eastward to a north-south line drawn roughly from central Oklahoma to the Canadian boundary. The dry area includes the western part of the Winter Wheat Belt where it is much too dry for seeding, and also the important wheat country of the Pacific Northwest, which is extremely dry, and wheat can be sown only in beds of dust. A large area west of the Rocky Mountains had an entirely rainless September.

In contrast to this dryness, very heavy rains have occurred in parts of the Southwest, especially western Texas and southern New Mexico, resulting in rather serious flood conditions in the Rio Grande. Agricultural damage has been confined mostly to minor crops and a small citrus acreage in lower valley sections. In other parts of the South, September weather was mostly favorable, especially for fall truck and pastures. Cotton developed rapidly, and picking and ginning advanced fairly well in most places, though in some sections there was considerable interruption by wet weather, which was favorable also for weevil activity. Citrus fruit in Florida, the Gulf States, and California, have been favored and are developing well, but apples in the Pacific Northwest are ripening too fast, because of continued dryness and warm weather, while drought has harmed the apple crop considerably in the heavy producing Shenandoah-Cumberland Valley section of the East. Generally speaking, fall work on farms is well in hand, except in the areas where it is too dry to plow and seed.